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Choosing comfort over inconvenience

Coping with the impact of a disaster is never fun. However, much of the inconvenience and discomfort the disaster causes can be reduced by planning alternative ways to take care of your needs.



Acquiring emergency supplies

At first glance, the list below may seem totally overwhelming. At second glance, you'll find that you probably already have many of these items.

X Check those items you already have.

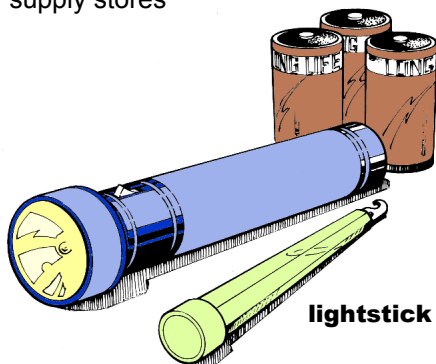
☐ Circle those you don't have, but are important to the comfort of you and your loved ones.

Choose two of those circled, and add them to your weekly shopping list.

Lighting

Caution: The use of candles is no longer recommended as a source of emergency light. Experience shows they are responsible for too many secondary fires following the disaster. Additionally, they are very dangerous in the presence of leaking natural gas.

- flashlights and extra batteries
- camping lanterns – store extra fuel, wicks, mantles and matches
- lightsticks – these can provide light for 1 to 12 hours and can be purchased at many camping supply stores

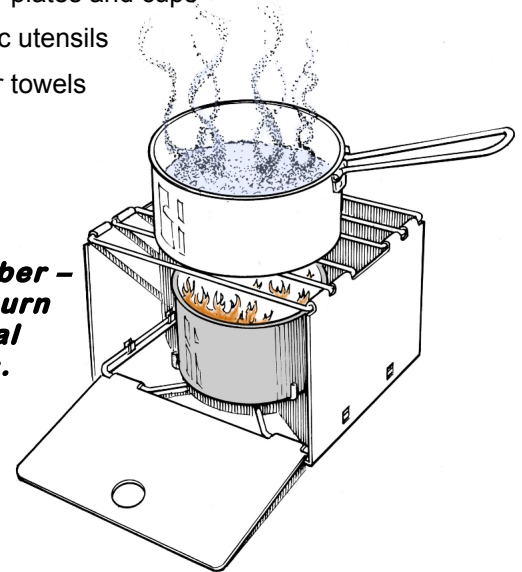


Cooking

Caution: Never burn charcoal indoors. This could cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

- camp stoves, sterno stoves, or barbecues – store extra propane, charcoal or sterno, lighter fluid, and matches
- fireplaces – do not use until the chimney and flue have been inspected for cracks. Sparks may escape into your attic through an undetected crack and start a fire.
- paper plates and cups
- plastic utensils
- paper towels

Remember – never burn charcoal indoors.



Shelter

It is common for people to not want to sleep in their homes for the first few days following a major earthquake. Having an alternate means of shelter will help you and your family be as comfortable as possible.

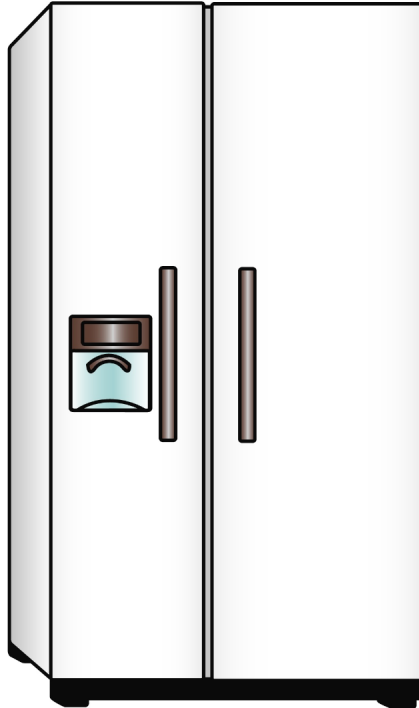
- tent or waterproof tarp
- sleeping bags or blankets, and pillows
- rain gear
- mylar blankets are compact and easy to store
- newspapers provide insulation from the cold or heat

Protecting stored foods when the power goes out

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
A full refrigerator will maintain safe temperatures for up to six hours.
A full freezer will maintain safe temperatures for up to two days; a half-full freezer for one day.
Discard at-risk refrigerated foods that are warmer than 40° Fahrenheit. If in doubt, throw it out.
- If you think the power will be out for several days, try to find some ice to pack inside the refrigerator and freezer.
Remember to keep your raw foods separate from your ready-to-eat foods.

Foods to be concerned about

- Foods are categorized into groups:
 - A. **Potentially hazardous foods** are the most important. These include meats, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs and egg products, soft cheeses, cooked beans, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, cooked pasta, custards, puddings, etc.
 - B. Some foods **may not be hazardous** but the quality may be affected. These foods include salad dressings, mayonnaise, butter, margarine, produce, hard cheeses, etc.
 - C. Some foods are **safe**. These are carbonated beverages, unopened bottled juices, ketchup, mustard, relishes, jams, peanut butter, barbecue sauces, etc.



When do I save and when do I throw out food?

- Refrigerated foods should be safe as long as the power is out no more than a few hours and the doors have been kept closed. **Potentially hazardous foods** should be discarded if they warm up above 40°F.
- Frozen foods which are still frozen are not a problem.
If **potentially hazardous foods** are thawed but still have ice crystals, you should use them as soon as possible.
- If **potentially hazardous foods** are thawed and warmer than 40°F, you should discard them.

How do I know if the food is unsafe to eat?

- You cannot rely upon appearance or odor. Never taste food to determine its safety.
- Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they've been warm too long, food poisoning bacteria may have grown enough to make you sick.
- If possible, use a thermometer to check the temperature of the foods. If potentially hazardous foods are colder than 40°F, they are safe.

What happens when the power goes back on?

- Allow time for refrigerators to reach the proper temperature of lower than 40°F before restocking. Start with all fresh foods.

***Remember -
when in doubt,
throw it out.***

Sanitation

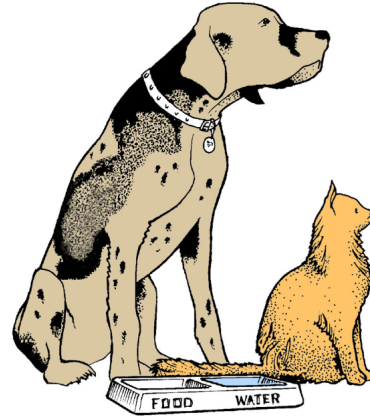
The lack of sanitation facilities following major earthquakes can quickly create secondary problems unless basic guidelines are followed. If the water lines are damaged, or if damage is suspected, do not flush the toilet.

Avoid digging holes in the ground and using these. Untreated raw sewage can pollute fresh ground water supplies. It also attracts flies and promotes the spread of diseases.

- Store a large supply of heavy-duty plastic bags, twist ties, disinfectant, and toilet paper.
- A good disinfectant that is easy to use is a solution of one-part liquid bleach to ten-parts water.
Dry bleach is caustic and not safe for this type of use.
- If the toilet is *not* able to be flushed, it can still be used. This is less stressful for most people than using some other container. Remove all the bowl water. Line bowl with a heavy-duty plastic bag. When finished, add a small amount of deodorant or disinfectant, securely tie the bag, and dispose of it in a large trash can with a tight fitting lid. This large trash can should also be lined with a sturdy trash bag.
Eventually, the city will provide a means to dispose of these bags.
- Portable camp toilets, small trash cans, or sturdy buckets lined with heavy-duty plastic bags can be used. Those with tight fitting lids are best.
- Large ziplock plastic bags and toilet paper should be kept at work and in the car for use if you are away from home. These can be wrapped in newspaper in preparation for future disposal.

Pets

Always keep a week's supply of food and water for your pet on hand.



- toilet bowl water is an excellent supply of water for pets following an earthquake

Emergency information

Obtain a battery-powered radio and a supply of extra batteries.

Identify the primary Emergency Alert Station (EAS) for your area and write it here:

